

UPGRADING RADIATION THERAPY SERVICES (MON/6/006) E2 New

CORE FINANCING

YEAR	Experts		Equipment	Fellowships		Scientific Visits		Training	Sub-contracts	Misc. Comp.	Total US \$
	m/d	US \$	US \$	m/d	US \$	m/d	US \$	US \$	US \$	US \$	
1995	1/0	11,400	100,000	6/0	19,800	0/15	6,300	-	-	-	137,500
1996	1/0	12,000	190,000	6/0	20,700	-	-	-	-	-	222,700

First Year Approved: 95

OBJECTIVES: To upgrade radiotherapy services for cancer.

BACKGROUND: The economic collapse in Mongolia is severe and its accelerated downturn was caused primarily by the abrupt deterioration in economic relations with the former USSR. For all practical purposes Mongolia can be classified as a Least Developed Country (LDC). Health is one of the high priority sectors, but the present situation has resulted in decreased funding and critical shortages for the health sector. WHO and other donor organizations are providing basic medical services. Radiotherapy in Mongolia is centralized at the Oncology Research Centre, Ulan Bator, which has 220 beds of which 70 are available for radiological treatment, 65 medical doctors and over 300 technical and paramedical staff. The Centre was built with the assistance of the former USSR through bilateral co-operation, and all equipment, most of which is at present not functioning, was supplied in 1981. The Centre has three radiotherapy units, but only one is currently usable for radiotherapy and it is in any case unreliable since the Co-60 source has decayed by more than two half-lives. Treatment planning is done without correction to tissue inhomogeneity. Treatment fields cannot be verified as there is no simulator. Patient dose is not monitored and conformity of the delivered dose with prescribed dose is not verified. Cancer patients do not have access to reliable radiotherapy treatment and it is therefore necessary to upgrade the existing radiotherapy services. The incidence of cancer in Mongolia is relatively high (19/10,000 in 1991) and reported cases of cancer have doubled during the last 10 years. Provision of radiotherapy is therefore a high priority area. Nuclear medicine, histopathology and other laboratory facilities that would confirm the initial diagnosis of cancer are available in Ulan Bator.

PROJECT PLAN: The main activities are centred on the provision of the necessary brachytherapy and teletherapy machines. Expert services for on-the-job training as well as training for two staff members in radiotherapy and dose optimization will be provided.

NATIONAL COMMITMENT: Adequate premises and qualified radiotherapists, engineers and other medical and technical staff; maintenance of the building and equipment; operating costs, including salaries.

AGENCY INPUT: Expert services and training in radiotherapy and medical physics; teletherapy and brachytherapy machines.

IMPACT: Improved health services will be provided and the survival rate of cancer patients will increase. The only Oncology Centre in the country will be able to continue to provide radiotherapy services and will be saved from further deterioration.